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To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/6/02 1:15pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

I am writing to you to express my disdain over the continued attempts to frustrate the settlement of the Microsoft case, by what is certainly a minority of computer users in this country, fueled by competitors of Microsoft and politicians who are NOT familiar with PC software (let alone PCs).

I wrote many of these same words to Senator Charles Schumer of New York because of his anti-Microsoft involvement and obvious lack of knowledge on the subject of their software packages. What he was doing was nothing short of impeding progress. Of course, as I suspected would be the case, I never received a reply from his office.

I am 46 years old, I have been in the business world my entire career, and I am proficient in the use of personal computers. My use of computers has developed over the years as a natural extension of my career (Financial Officer) as well as my personal interest in them.

I have used PCs prior to Microsoft products such as Windows, Office, and Internet Explorer, and extensively since the Microsoft Windows inception. I've used Lotus, and WordPerfect (they are NOT Microsoft products). And without a doubt, Microsoft products are superior to anything else out there.

As for the completely baseless worry that some of our politicians seem to have over the choice of other products, or inability to use other products that aren't built into Microsoft Windows -- this simply shows that they do not know what they are talking about.

Let me give you some analogies that should ring close to home... Microsoft Windows (older versions OR the new XP version released last Fall) offers more flexibility, choice of using other products with it, etc., than any of the following that I use:

1. My utilities. ANY of them.
2. My healthcare benefits, including choice of a physician.
3. My America Online account (a member for six years).
4. My local and long distance telephone carrier.

And consider this: I can add products to my PC, made by someone other than Microsoft, and do it easily, ONLY because Microsoft has brought standardization to the industry. They brought the concept of "Plug and Play" to the PC world, which means: Buy someone else's products and Microsoft software actually assists your computer to make sure it works, by identifying the drivers needed and making all the interconnections necessary to connect it to your monitor, printer, scanner or other peripherals!

Do that with any of the items listed above. Try to "plug and play" a different electricity company this month because you are tired of using the one you currently have. And then plug another one in if that one doesn't suit you after a day of using it. Or try that with your health plan. Or the physician you just used, and wish to use another one for your visit next week. Good luck trying.

The point is, their software is theirs and in the opinion of most PC-literate people out there, they have already gone out of their way to accommodate other companies by allowing virtually any software to be used in conjunction with it.

So the next argument is that even though it is possible to do, it might be too difficult to use another software product with it? Well let me tell you this...if you have just basic PC skills, it is not that hard to substitute another product for the ones that come with the Microsoft software packages. But let's just assume that it takes a little effort to figure out how to do it... If you had the option to do that with your health plan or your utilities would you take the time to learn how to do it? You can bet your bottom dollar that you would.

Now consider this: Millions of PC-literate people out there DO know how to do this switch in products, but like me, they do not. Because they don't want to.

That brings me back to my original comment: once you experiment with the other products out there, you come back to the Microsoft ones because they are the best. Why do you think their products are used by virtually everyone out there? Because they were FORCED to use them? Heaven knows that I have every capability of purchasing the Lotus/WordPerfect suite of office software for work or at home, but I wouldn't because I like the Microsoft Office package better. And I could change my browser today to be Netscape's... but I won't because I like the Internet Explorer.

It is time that the politicians quit making issues where there aren't issues.

The focus on trying to find problems with Microsoft should be left in the past with the inept administration that started it. We should be thankful that this country is being led today by people with true honor and dignity, who are bringing us together, united in the quest for Freedom. And that means the freedom to choose the Microsoft products, because they are superior to others, even if every single PC owner in the world does so and the Microsoft products become synonymous with "Kleenex" or "Xerox." After all, those companies MADE the markets that they still compete in.

Perhaps through other informed PC users out there, we can tell the Senator Schumers and the lawyers representing Microsoft's competitors to get with it and leave Microsoft alone. Microsoft has done more good for this country, by

bringing productivity enhancements to the business world, and more information via PCs/PC software advancements to people in their homes, than most of our politicians could ever hope to do in their lifetime.

Sincerely,

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